

What is claimed is:

1 1. An image delivery system for delivering an
2 object moving-visual-image file (hereinafter called the
3 object file) to a terminal communicably connected to said
4 system through a communications network, said system
5 comprising:

6 (a) image storage means for storing a master
7 moving-visual-image file (hereinafter called the master
8 file), containing individual moving visual images of a
9 plurality of users and previously obtained by videoing
10 the plural users substantially continuously;

11 (b) link information management means for storing
12 link information linking a plurality of parts of said master
13 file, which is stored in said image storage means, with
14 the respective users; and

15 (c) image delivery control means, responsive to the
16 receipt of an object-file delivery request of one
17 individual user from said terminal, for reading out a
18 corresponding one of the plural parts of said master file,
19 in which part said one individual user appears, from said
20 storage means, and delivering the read-out part of said
21 master file to said terminal through the communications
22 network as the object file.

1 2. An image delivery system according to claim 1,
2 further comprising (d) image editing control means,

3 responsive to the receipt of an object-file editing and
4 delivery request of one individual user from said terminal,
5 for reading out a corresponding one of the plural parts
6 of said master file, in which part said one individual
7 user appears, based on said link information, from said
8 storage means, editing the read-out part of said master
9 file, and delivering the resulting part of said master
10 file to said terminal as the edited object file.

1 3. An image delivery system according to claim 2,
2 further comprising (e) erasing control means for erasing
3 the corresponding one of the plural parts of said master
4 file stored in said image storage means, in which part
5 said one individual user appears, after the edited object
6 file has been delivered to said terminal.

1 4. An image delivery system according to claim 1,
2 wherein said image delivery control means controls an image
3 delivering rate in terms of the number of image frames
4 per second in accordance with a condition of connection
5 of said terminal with the communications network.

1 5. An image delivery system according to claim 2,
2 wherein said image delivery control means controls an image
3 delivering rate in terms of the number of image frames
4 per second in accordance with a condition of connection
5 of said terminal with the communications network.

1 6. An image delivery system according to claim 3,
2 wherein said image delivery control means controls an image
3 delivering rate in terms of the number of image frames
4 per second in accordance with a condition of connection
5 of said terminal with the communications network.

1 7. An image delivery method for delivering an
2 object moving-visual-image file (hereinafter called the
3 object file) from a delivery source to a terminal
4 communicably connected to the delivery source through a
5 communications network, said method comprising the steps
6 of:

7 (a) storing both a master moving-visual-image file
8 (hereinafter called the master file), which contains
9 individual moving visual images of a plurality of users
10 and was previously obtained by videoing the plural users
11 substantially continuously, and link information linking
12 a plurality of parts of said master file with the respective
13 users, into a storage device, which is a component of the
14 delivery source or an external element communicably
15 connected with the delivery source; and

16 at the delivery source

17 (b) upon receipt of an object-file delivery request
18 of one individual user from said terminal, reading out
19 a corresponding one of the plural parts of said master
20 file, in which part said one individual user appears, from
21 the storage device, and delivering the read-out part of

22 said master file to said terminal through the
23 communications network as the object file.

1 8. An image delivery method according to claim 7,
2 further comprising the steps of:

3 at the delivery source

4 (c) upon receipt of an object-file editing request
5 of one individual user from said terminal, reading out
6 a corresponding one of the plural parts of said master
7 file, in which part said one individual user appears, from
8 the storage device based on said link information, and
9 editing the read-out part of said master file; and

10 (d) delivering the resulting part of said master
11 file to said terminal as the edited object file.

1 9. An image delivery method according to claim 8,
2 further comprising the step of: at the delivery source
3 (e) erasing the corresponding one of the plural parts of
4 said master file stored in said image storage means, in
5 which part said one individual user appears, after the
6 edited object file has been delivered to said terminal
7 in said delivering step (d).

1 10. An image delivery method according to claim
2 7, wherein in said reading and delivering step (b), an
3 image delivering rate is controlled in terms of the number
4 of image frames per second in accordance with a condition

5 of connection of said terminal with the communications
6 network.

1 11. An image delivery method according to claim
2 8, wherein in each of said reading and delivering step
3 (b) and said edited object file delivering step (d), an
4 image delivering rate is controlled in terms of the number
5 of image frames per second in accordance with a condition
6 of connection of said terminal with the communications
7 network.

1 12. An image delivery method according to claim
2 9, wherein in each of said reading and delivering step
3 (b) and said edited object file delivering step (d), an
4 image delivering rate is controlled in terms of the number
5 of image frames per second in accordance with a condition
6 of connection of said terminal with the communications
7 network.

1 13. An image delivery method for delivering an
2 object moving-visual-image file (hereinafter called the
3 object file) from a server to a client communicably
4 connected to the server through a communications network,
5 said method comprising the steps:

6 at the server

7 (a) rendering the client to display, on a display
8 screen of the client, a message asking a user to input

9 user identification information on the client;

10 (b) rendering the client to display, on the display
11 screen of the client, a title or titles of one or more
12 mastermoving-visual-image files (each hereinafter called
13 themaster file) linked with the last-named user identified
14 by the input user identification information, each master
15 file containing individual moving visual images of a
16 plurality of users including said last-named user and being
17 previously obtained by videoing the plural users
18 substantially continuously and stored in a storage device,
19 which is a component of the server or an external element
20 communicably connected with the server; and

21 (c) upon receipt of an object-file delivery request,
22 which designates the title of a particular one of the plural
23 master files, of said last-named user from the client,
24 (c1) reading out a corresponding one of the plural parts
25 of said particular one master file, in which part said
26 last-named user appears, from the storage device based
27 on both the designated title of said particular one master
28 file and time codes representing a location or a set of
29 locations of said corresponding part of said particular
30 one master file and stored in the storage device, and (c2)
31 rendering the client to display the read-out part of said
32 particular one master file on the display screen of the
33 client as the object file.

1 14. An image delivery method for delivering an

2 object moving-visual-image file (hereinafter called the
3 object file) from a server to a client communicably
4 connected to the server through a communications network,
5 said method comprising the steps of:

6 at the server

7 (a) rendering the client to display, on a display
8 screen of the client, a message asking a user to input
9 user identification information on the client;

10 (b) rendering the client to display, on the display
11 screen of the client, (i) a title or titles of one or more
12 master moving-visual-image files (each hereinafter called
13 the master file) linked with the last-named user identified
14 by the input user identification information, each master
15 file containing individual moving visual images of a
16 plurality of users including said last-named user and being
17 previously obtained by videoing the plural users
18 substantially continuously, each said master file being
19 composed of a plurality of parts in which the plural users
20 respectively appear and being stored in a storage device,
21 which is a component of the server or an external element
22 communicably connected with the server, and (ii) a
23 plurality of predetermined editing ways for designation
24 and selection by said last-named user;

25 (c) upon receipt of an object-file editing and
26 delivery request, which designates the title of a
27 particular one of the plural master files and selects a
28 desired one of the plural predetermined editing ways, of

29 said last-named user from the client, (c1) reading out
30 a corresponding one of the plural parts of said particular
31 one master file, in which part said last-named user appears,
32 from the storage device based on both the designated title
33 of said particular one master file and time codes
34 representing a location or a set of locations of said
35 corresponding part of said particular one master file,
36 (c2) editing the read-out corresponding part of said
37 particular one master file in the selected editing way,
38 and (c3) rendering the client to display the resulting
39 part of said particular one master file on the display
40 screen of the client as the edited object file.

1 15. An image delivery method according to claim
2 14, further comprising the steps of:

3 at the server

4 (d) rendering the client to display, on the display
5 screen of the client, a message asking the user if the
6 resulting moving visual image of the edited object file
7 is approved by the user; and

8 (e) upon receipt of the approval of the edited object
9 file from the client, downloading the edited object file
10 to the client.

1 16. A recording medium in which an image delivery
2 program for delivering an object moving-visual-image file
3 (hereinafter called the object file) from a delivery source

4 to a terminal communicably connected to the delivery source
5 through a communications network is recorded, wherein said
6 program instructs a computer at the delivery source to
7 execute the steps of:

8 (a) storing both (i) a master moving-visual-image
9 file (hereinafter called the master file), which contains
10 moving visual images of a plurality of users and was
11 previously obtained by videoing the plural users
12 substantially continuously, into a storage device, which
13 is a component of the delivery source or an external element
14 communicably connected with the delivery source, said
15 master file being composed of a plurality of parts in which
16 the respective users appear, and (ii) link information
17 linking the plural parts with the respective users; and

18 (b) upon receipt of an object-file delivery request
19 of a user from said terminal, (b1) reading out a
20 corresponding one of the plural parts of said master file,
21 in which part the last-named user appears, from the storage
22 device based on said link information stored in the storage
23 device, and (b2) delivering the read-out corresponding
24 one part of said master file to said terminal as the
25 requested object file.

1 17. A recording medium according to claim 16,
2 wherein said program instructs the computer at the delivery
3 source to execute the following added steps of:

4 (c) upon receipt of an object-file editing request

5 of one individual user from said terminal, (c1) reading
6 out a corresponding one of the plural parts of said master
7 file, in which part said one individual user appears, from
8 the storage device based on said link information, and
9 (c2) editing the read-out part of said master file; and
10 (d) delivering the resulting part of said master
11 file to said terminal as the edited object file.

1 18. A recording medium according to claim 17,
2 wherein said program instructs the computer at the delivery
3 source to further execute the step of (e) erasing the
4 corresponding one of the plural parts of said master file
5 stored in said image storage means, in which part said
6 one individual user appears, after the edited object file
7 has been delivered to said terminal.

1 19. A recording medium according to claim 16,
2 wherein said program instructs the computer at the delivery
3 source to control, in said reading and delivering step
4 (b), an image delivering rate in terms of the number of
5 image frames per second in accordance with a condition
6 of connection of said terminal with the communications
7 network.

1 20. A recording medium according to claim 17,
2 wherein said program instructs the computer at the delivery
3 source to control, in each of said reading and delivering

4 step (b) and said delivering step (d), an image delivering
5 rate in terms of the number of image frames per second
6 in accordance with a condition of connection of said
7 terminal with the communications network.

1 21. A recording medium according to claim 18,
2 wherein said program instructs the computer at the delivery
3 source to control, in each of said reading and delivering
4 step (b) and said delivering step (d), an image delivering
5 rate in terms of the number of image frames per second
6 in accordance with a condition of connection of said
7 terminal with the communications network.

1 22. A recording medium in which an image delivery
2 program for delivering an object moving-visual-image file
3 (hereinafter called the object file) from a server to a
4 client communicably connected to the server through a
5 communications network is recorded, wherein said program
6 instructs a computer at the server to execute the steps
7 of:

8 (a) rendering the client to display, on a display
9 screen of the client, a message asking a user to input
10 user identification information on the client;

11 (b) rendering the client to display, on the display
12 screen of the client, a title or titles of one or more
13 moving-visual-image master files (each hereinafter called
14 the master file) linked with the last-named user identified

15 by the input user identification information for
16 designation by said last-named user, each master file
17 containing individual moving visual images of a plurality
18 of users including said last-named user and previously
19 obtained by videoing the plural users substantially
20 continuously and stored in a storage device, which is a
21 component of the server or an external element communicably
22 connected with the server; and

23 (c) upon receipt of an object-file delivery request,
24 which designates the title of a desired one master file,
25 of said last-named user from the client, each said master
26 file being composed of a plurality of parts in which the
27 respective users appear, (c1) reading out a corresponding
28 one of the plural parts of said desired one master file,
29 in which part said last-named user identified by said input
30 user identification information appears, from the storage
31 device based on both the designated title of said particular
32 one master file and time codes representing a location
33 or a set of locations of said corresponding one part of
34 said desired one master file, and (c2) rendering the client
35 to display the read-out corresponding part of said desired
36 master file on the display screen of the client as the
37 object file.

1 23. A recording medium in which an image delivery
2 program for delivering an object moving-visual-image file
3 (hereinafter called the object file) from a server to a

4 client is recorded, wherein said program instructs a
5 computer at the server to execute the steps of:

6 (a) rendering the client to display, on a display
7 screen of the client, a message asking a user to input
8 user identification information on the client;

9 (b) rendering the client to display, on the display
10 screen of the client, (i) a title or titles of one or more
11 master files (each hereinafter called the master file)
12 linked with the last-named user identified by the input
13 user identification information, each master file
14 containing individual moving visual images of a plurality
15 of users including said last-named user and being
16 previously obtained by videoing the plural users
17 substantially continuously and stored in a storage device,
18 which is a component of the server or an external element
19 communicably connected with the server, and (ii) a
20 plurality of predetermined editing ways for designation
21 and selection by said last-named user; and

22 (c) upon receipt of an object-file editing and
23 delivery request, which designates the title of a
24 particular one master file and selects a desired one of
25 the plural predetermined editing ways, of said last-named
26 user from the client, (c1) reading out a corresponding
27 one of the plural parts of said particular one master file,
28 in which part said last-named user appears, from the storage
29 device based on the designated title of said particular
30 one master file and time codes representing a location

31 or a set of locations of said corresponding one part in
32 which said last-named user appears, (c2) editing the
33 read-out part of said particular one master file in the
34 selected predetermined editing way, and (c3) rendering
35 the client to display the resulting part of said particular
36 one master file object on the display screen of the client
37 as the edited object file.

1 24. A recording medium according to claim 23,
2 wherein said program instructs the computer at the server
3 to execute the following added steps of:

4 (d) rendering the client to display, on the display
5 screen of the client, a message asking the user if the
6 edited object file is approved by the user; and

7 (e) upon receipt of the approval of the edited object
8 file from the client, downloading the requested edited
9 object file to the client.